

## CONDITION OF OMAHA'S TRADE

Local Jobbing Situation Remains Practically Unchanged.

## COUNTRY COLLECTIONS CONTINUE SLOW

**B**usiness Anxius for Rain to Give a Fresh Start to Spring Trade—Live Stock Being More Scarce Every Day—Manufacturers' Doings.

There is without doubt a better feeling among the jobbers of this city, but whether it is due to the fact that spring is at hand, or whether there is really an improved condition in trade it is rather difficult to say. As a rule the leading jobbers report that there has not been any material increase in the volume of business during the past week, but at the same time they are more encouraging. For some time now, when there has been a considerable snowfall during the winter, and where the ground is moist, as in the southwestern portion, the retail merchants are feeling much better. In the greater part of the country tributary to this market it is still very dry and every mail brings complaints of the lack of rain and the consequent dullness of trade. There has never been a time when so much depended upon the weather, whether when every indication of coming moisture was more welcome. A great many country merchants are buying nothing and will not attempt to do any amount of business until the rain comes, for then there is moisture enough in the ground to give the crops a start.

A local jobber likes to suggest a return to the man who has been sitting on the river bank for some time waiting for the fish to take his bait, but without success. After a time he becomes very tired at the obscurity of the fish, but at last he sees a fish rise to the surface of the water and he feels relieved at the prospect that there are fish there, and at the same time he gets along. So it is with the jobbers, who think that they see indications coming to the surface that will point to an increased business.

It is, however, a surprise to many that business is really as good as it is, when all the factors are considered in their proper consideration. Business continues to come along even from localities where it would be hardly reasonable to expect anything. If the trade had been very bad, the present time with everything against it, the jobbers reason that with the coming of rain and the consequent outlook for crops there ought to be a decided improvement in the volume of business.

A jobber remarked the other day that he had no particular hope concerning the jobbers of this city had ever seen, should there be a good crop. "Why," said he, "the mind that the small farmer in the stock yard is not the same with him in the store front, and the same with him in the trucking department." The retail trade has reduced stocks to the lowest point, and when we consider them have almost cleared their shelves in their departments of the grocery stores, we find that there is a certainty of a good crop this year. When we look at the market we see that all want goods and they will want them in a hurry, and there will not be men enough in the jobbing houses of Omaha to fill the orders, that will come pouring in from every direction.

Collections in the country are quiet and the trade is considerably duller than in the score. A good deal of the money has been drained out of the country and those who have a little extra realize that they have a great use for it, but the new crop can be marketed and are holding onto it with an iron grip. At this season of the year the farm products are in great demand, and cattle to turn into money, which is a great help, but this season the trade they do not have that resort to be had upon.

## COUNTRY PHOTOS.

The produce market during the past week has been very quiet and practically devoid of new or interesting features. Values have fluctuated to some extent, but the general price of the market has been quite steady. Eggs are moving freely, but on most days of the week the market has been dead. Fallen considerably below the record of last season.

The beginning of mild and springlike weather has given some impetus to the vegetable trade and wholesalers in that line are looking around for sources from which to draw the supplies. As far as the market is concerned, we are hearing about the great shipments that will be able to make, but the experience of past seasons has taught the white onion terms. Perhaps his predictions will be realized.

"Business in wholesale circles has not been extra good for the week, though better than the market was expected. This is not especially encouraging, however, for very little was sold and is expected. The next six months will try to good many a commercial house, and others will be disappointed.

It is remarkable, however, that very few mercantile failures are occurring. The lumber yards are pretty well cut out, but the trade is not particularly bad, and with them have almost cleared their shelves in their departments of the grocery stores. A year ago at this time Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas were sending large quantities of lumber to the northern markets, but by far the season they have had practically nothing to ship. New York City has received a few small shipments, but these are from the south, which have sold at almost fabulous prices and way above what a western market could pay. The sales are not so good as last year, and fruits have started the California to extend their market, an opportunity which they have not been slow in improving.

As a general thing the wholesale dealers in fruits and vegetables in this section of the country are looking for a low year for the market, and the smaller dealers know that numbers will not purchase. That was about the situation last season. It was noted that so long as berries and other early fruits were in abundance, as some time ago, the price jumped up a little, the demand would come to a sudden standstill.

## LIVE STOCK.

The outlook for cattle is not at all to the liking of the packers, and at the present time the market has steadily advanced and prices for all kinds of cattle are very high, in fact, it is reported from some sections that feeders are selling as high as fat cattle, and the market is still in a high position, usually follows that every section of the country is ransacked and the supply usually proves to be larger than was anticipated. The market is extremely vicious, and from a business man's standpoint, the market is not likely to improve.

The packers have voted a bounty upon beet sugar, which in my opinion, is right, and I would be glad to see the theory induced stimulate likewise, but the other industries likewise to other industries likewise to other industries likewise valuable to the state, and they seem bent on injecting more politics into state management affairs. The question is, remarked, we have altogether to little statesmanship and too much politics at both capitals—Washington and Lincoln."

A person will tender his resignation, as he contemplates moving out of the state, and that a successor will be elected, J. C. Harlan of Illinois is the vice president of the association and is the man in charge of promotion. It is possible that he may be asked to take a step higher and become president. In this case it will be necessary to select a vice president also. Harlan will also be entitled to one more director, and the matter of filling that vacancy will come up at the meeting.

The most important questions to be brought before the meeting will be the subject of an exposition this fall. Ever since the formation of the association it has been the custom to have an exhibition of home made goods. During the first two years of the life of the association these exhibits were limited to the fair, but at that time in Lincoln, where they formed a part of the state fair. This year there are some who favor the holding of an independent fair in Omaha, separate from the state fair. Those who are advocating this plan propose that a temporary building be erected in the center of the city at the most accessible point, and that the exposition be held there thus affording a down town evening attraction for those who are not in the city all day.

Several Omaha manufacturers have offered to go on guarantees bold to cover the cost of the building and expense of an enterprise. It is claimed that it would require a building 25 feet square to accommodate the exhibit.

In regard to the proposed Domestic Science department of the Woman's club have signified that they would not object to displaying the quality of patronizing home industrial art, and at the same time they would partake of a bunch of Nebraskans manufacturing food products.

## TRADE FROM DUN'S POINT OF VIEW.

**H**ard Times Will Not Last Always—Imperial Outlook Big with Promise.

The local manager for R. G. Dun & Co.'s Mercantile agency says:

"Governor Holcombe's speech at a recent banquet calls particular attention to the fact that Nebraska has had very few failures. Later an estimate from the Modern Miller of the present condition of winter wheat, making it 76.83, as compared with previous year's 76.33, gave the market its second growth and it grew for a time quite vigorously.

In wheat the dry weather reassured today its claim to recognition and became a principal factor in the early advance.

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